

Oyster Bay Nursery

Equality and Diversity Policy

Date written: October 2026

Date of last update: October 2026

Date agreed and ratified by October 2026

Date of next full review: September 2027

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any lessons learnt and/or updates to national or local guidance and procedures.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Debra Hines
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Grace Sidders Rachel Finch
Nominated Individual	Debra Hines
Nursery Manager	Grace Sidders

1. Policy Statement

Oyster Bay Nursery is committed to providing an inclusive, welcoming and respectful environment where every child, parent, carer, staff member and visitor is valued and treated fairly.

We recognise that every child is unique and that children and families have different backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, languages, abilities and needs. We aim to ensure that all children have equal opportunities to learn, play, develop and reach their full potential, free from discrimination, prejudice or unfair treatment.

We promote equality, diversity, inclusion and respect throughout all aspects of nursery life. We will challenge discriminatory behaviour and language and work in partnership with families to ensure every child feels safe, accepted and included.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide equal opportunities for all children and families.
- Promote respect for different cultures, religions, languages, family structures and backgrounds.
- Ensure children are not disadvantaged because of their individual circumstances or characteristics.
- Identify and reduce barriers to participation, learning and development.
- Challenge discrimination, stereotypes, bullying and prejudice.
- Provide an inclusive environment that reflects the diversity of the community.
- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities in promoting equality and inclusion.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to support each child's individual needs.

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

Oyster Bay Nursery will work in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance, including:

- Equality Act 2010.
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004.
- Childcare Act 2006.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.

- The current Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for England.
- Relevant safeguarding and inclusion guidance.

The nursery will review this policy when legislation or statutory guidance changes.

4. Equality and Protected Characteristics

We will not tolerate unlawful discrimination related to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race, including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

We recognise that some protected characteristics apply differently depending on the context, including employment and the provision of childcare services.

We will also seek to prevent unfair treatment related to a family's circumstances, language, income, family structure or other individual needs, wherever possible and appropriate.

5. Inclusive Practice for Children

All children will be supported to participate in nursery activities, routines and experiences.

Staff will:

- Treat every child as an individual and respect their identity, interests and experiences.

- Plan activities that reflect different cultures, communities, abilities and family structures.
- Provide toys, books, images, music and resources that represent a diverse range of people and experiences.
- Avoid gender stereotyping and allow children to explore activities and interests freely.
- Support children who speak English as an additional language, using appropriate visual aids, gestures, key words and family input where helpful.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled children where required.
- Adapt activities, routines and the environment to meet children's individual needs.
- Ensure all children have opportunities to contribute, make choices and develop independence.
- Observe children's progress and identify where additional support may be beneficial.

No child will be excluded from activities solely because of disability, cultural background, language, religion, sex or another protected characteristic. Where a child requires additional support, the nursery will work with the family and relevant professionals to identify appropriate arrangements.

6. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Oyster Bay Nursery is committed to inclusive practice for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

We will:

- Identify and respond to children's emerging needs as early as possible.
- Work closely with parents and carers to understand each child's strengths and support needs.
- Follow the nursery's SEND procedures and the relevant statutory guidance.
- Make reasonable adjustments and consider suitable adaptations to activities, equipment and the environment.
- Work with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), where appointed, and other professionals as appropriate.

- Support children's participation, relationships, learning and development.
- Treat information about a child's needs confidentially and share it appropriately.

We will not make assumptions about a child's abilities or needs based on a diagnosis, disability or other characteristic.

7. Working with Parents and Families

We value the knowledge and experience that parents and carers bring to their child's care and development.

The nursery will:

- Treat all families respectfully and without prejudice.
- Recognise different family structures, cultures, traditions and beliefs.
- Communicate with families in an accessible and considerate way.
- Make reasonable efforts to overcome language or communication barriers.
- Take account of relevant cultural, religious and dietary requirements.
- Listen to parents' views and involve them in decisions affecting their child.
- Respect confidentiality and handle personal information in accordance with the nursery's Data Protection and Privacy Policy.

Parents and carers are encouraged to share information that will help the nursery support their child's identity, wellbeing, learning and inclusion.

8. Equality and Diversity in Employment

Oyster Bay Nursery is committed to fair and inclusive employment practices.

Recruitment, selection, training, promotion and other employment decisions will be based on relevant skills, qualifications, experience and suitability for the role.

The nursery will:

- Provide equal opportunities to applicants and staff in accordance with applicable law.
- Avoid discriminatory questions and assumptions during recruitment.
- Provide staff with appropriate equality, diversity and inclusion guidance.

- Consider reasonable adjustments for disabled employees and applicants where required.
- Address discriminatory behaviour, harassment, bullying or victimisation.
- Encourage staff to raise concerns without fear of unfair treatment.

All staff are expected to contribute to a respectful workplace and act as positive role models for children.

9. Challenging Discrimination and Prejudice

Discriminatory language, behaviour, harassment, bullying and exclusion will be addressed promptly and appropriately.

If a child expresses a biased view or behaves in a discriminatory way, staff will respond calmly and in an age-appropriate manner. They will help the child understand fairness, kindness, respect and the impact of their actions.

If a parent, visitor or staff member behaves in a discriminatory or offensive manner, the Nursery Manager will consider the circumstances and take appropriate action.

Concerns involving staff may be managed under the nursery's disciplinary procedures. Any concern that raises a safeguarding issue will be managed in accordance with the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

10. Resources, Activities and the Learning Environment

The nursery will regularly consider whether its environment and resources support equality and inclusion.

Where practicable, resources will include:

- Books and stories featuring people from different backgrounds and family structures.
- Dolls, figures, puzzles and play materials that reflect a range of appearances and abilities.
- Opportunities to explore different cultures, languages, music and traditions respectfully.
- Activities that encourage cooperation, empathy, fairness and respect.
- Accessible equipment and adaptations to support participation.

Cultural and religious celebrations will be approached sensitively. No child or family will be expected to represent an entire culture or belief group.

11. Staff Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for implementing this policy in their everyday practice.

Staff must:

- Treat children, families, colleagues and visitors with dignity and respect.
- Challenge stereotypes and discriminatory behaviour appropriately.
- Provide fair access to activities and learning opportunities.
- Respect children's individual identities, backgrounds and needs.
- Maintain professional boundaries and confidentiality.
- Attend relevant training and follow nursery procedures.
- Report concerns about discrimination, harassment or exclusion to the Nursery Manager.
- Follow safeguarding procedures whenever a concern may affect a child's safety or welfare.

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that staff understand this policy, receive suitable guidance and apply it consistently.

12. Complaints and Concerns

Parents, carers, staff and visitors who have concerns about equality, diversity or inclusion should raise them with the Nursery Manager or Nominated Individual.

Concerns will be listened to respectfully, handled fairly and investigated where appropriate. The nursery will aim to resolve concerns promptly and take suitable action where necessary.

Formal complaints will be managed in accordance with the nursery's Complaints Policy and Procedure.

No person will be treated unfairly for raising a genuine concern in good faith.

13. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager will monitor the implementation of this policy and consider whether nursery practice supports the needs of all children and families.

This may include reviewing:

- Children's participation in activities and learning opportunities.
- The suitability and accessibility of resources and the environment.
- Feedback and concerns raised by parents, carers and staff.
- Staff training and understanding of equality responsibilities.
- Whether changes are needed to improve inclusion.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance or nursery practice.

14. Policy Commitment

Oyster Bay Nursery is committed to ensuring that every child and family feels welcomed, respected and included. Equality, diversity and inclusion are ongoing responsibilities shared by the whole nursery community.

By working together, we aim to create a positive environment where differences are respected, unfair treatment is challenged, and every child has the opportunity to thrive.